

28 October 1983

## GRENADA/COUP

RATHER: Good evening. This is the CBS Evening News, Dan Rather reporting. The United States now has 6,000 troops on Grenada, triple the number that took part in the Tuesday morning invasion. And apparently many in that American military force will be there longer than was originally indicated. Army Rangers of the assault force prepared to return home today; no word on when the Marines will proceed on to Beirut, where they were headed when the invasion plans got the go-ahead. More of the 82nd Airborne Army division came in today. The number of U.S. military dead from Grenada reached 11 today officially, with 67 wounded and seven missing. Eight of the dead arrived at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware yesterday; word of that just disclosed late today. Pentagon correspondent David Martin reports now on the Defense Department's version of what is happening on Grenada.

MARTIN: President Reagan called it mopping up, and many of these pictures released today by the Defense Department made it look almost easy. Marines moving through northern parts of the island were greeted as conquering heroes. But the overall commander of the operation reported that some fighting is still going on. ADM. WESLEY MCDONALD (Operational Commander): Heavy fighting occurred on the evening of 27 October, at the Calivigny military barracks area. Air strikes and artillery were used to help our forces secure that area. They are continuing to receive small-arms fire.

MARTIN: With 6,000 U.S. soldiers now ashore, most of the remaining fighting is taking place in the south. The Army shelled the area from emplacement around Pt. Salines airfield. Navy jets from the carrier Independence made strafing runs, and Air Force C-130 gunships unloaded their cannons on suspected hideouts. There is strong suspicion the military barracks at Point Calivigny housed a terrorist training camp. That could help explain the presence of some 30 East Germans, Bulgarians and North Koreans inside the Soviet embassy. ALAN ROMBERG (Pentagon Spokesman): It came as a surprise because we didn't know they were there. Ah, it's also of some interest that they were there and what it may say about the kind of role that they were playing.

MARTIN: That could also help explain the large cache of arms and ammunition found earlier at Pt. Salines. U.S. intelligence had spotted the warehouses which held the weapons but had not known what was inside. It is now believed the weapons were brought in by Cuban ships under cover of darkness. MCDONALD: The overwhelming evidence from our ground troops is that Cubans, not Grenadians, were in the forefront of the fighting.

*CONTINUED*

2.

MARTIN: According to captured documents, there are 1,100 Cubans on the island. CIA Director William Casey told a closed session of the Senate Intelligence Committee that was 3-400 more than originally, but he called the error acceptable. Whatever errors were made, the invasion produced an intelligence bonanza.

MCDONALD: ...including many top-secret documents, cipher and crypto gear, new weapons, radios and counter-intelligence equipment.

MARTIN: Mopping up the remaining Cubans could become a drawn-out process. MCDONALD: I think they're going back into the hills. That will present a problem for us, because we cannot afford to allow the withdrawal of all of the forces and have an insurgency government. And that's why we're so determined to look into the mountains and into the rest of the places outside of St. Georges and outside of \*Grandville and to, ah, to see if we can't reduce that threat.

MARTIN: It now seems it will be weeks, rather than days, before American forces are withdrawn from Grenada. But Adm. McDonald refused to rule out the possibility that the U.S. might someday establish a permanent military base on the island. David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.